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Book Reviews

SALVATION IN CHRIST: A LUTHERAN-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE. Edited with an Introduction by John Meyendorff and Robert Tobias. Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1992.

The following reflections on the American Lutheran-Orthodox dialogue are given from the perspective of the European dialogue and from recent research on Luther. The remarks here mostly concern the "Common Statement" (pages 15-33), but conclude with some brief remarks concerning the accompanying articles. Regarding the "Common Statement," three significant areas of concern must be discussed: (1.) the special position of the Lutheran Reformation in the western tradition; (2.) the relationship between justification and sanctification; and (3.) the ecclesiological and sacramental context.

(1.) The "Common Statement" understands Luther almost exclusively within the western tradition, more specifically within the Anselmic tradition of the doctrine of "vicarious satisfaction" (the substitutionary death of Christ "for us," page 30). For the Lutherans, therefore, a forensic, imputed justification becomes the key interpretative concept, while the Eastern Orthodox represent the idea of participation and communion (see page 30). Put much too simply, as the statement itself says, Lutherans emphasize Galatians and Romans, while the Eastern Orthodox emphasize the Gospel of John and First John (page 25). Parenthetically it is also mentioned that Luther, as do the Greek Fathers, speaks of reconciliation "in the wider context of victory over death and of sanctification" (page 25). Despite this qualification, however, it is simply not true to say that "there is no question that Lutherans and Orthodox are drawn to different biblical words and images to express their respective understanding of salvation" (page 25). And the further assertion is likewise false: "The two traditions have appropriated different aspects of Scriptures in preaching and teaching salvation" (page 25).

To this point two comments are necessary. First of all, the Lutheran Book of Concord positions the confession of the early church before the Augsburg Confession and the other Lutheran confessions, and the Preface makes explicit reference to these ancient creeds. The first article of the Augustana states its *magnus consensus* in reference to the Council of Nicaea. The "Catalogue of Testimonies," moreover, which is appended to the Formula of Concord, in no way includes only western testimonies, but includes to an equal extent testimonies from the eastern tradition. This means that justification is rightly comprehended only in agreement with the decisions of the early

church as a whole, including the corresponding condemnations. The "Common Statement" in no way comes to terms with the Lutheran claim to be heir also of this early heritage of the church.

Secondly, this book fails to do justice to the central concern of the Great Reformer himself, beginning with the statement that he was not a systematic thinker ("lack of systematization," page 70). This overlooks the fact that Luther possessed a different way of thinking and presenting than the *quaestiones* of the scholastics or of Lutheran Orthodoxy. To use the terminology of Kant, Luther proceeded intuitively (out of the whole) not discursively. As an interpreter of the Scriptures, Luther used the method of inferences and coinherences, which saw everything in large mutual interrelationships (the Trinity, christology, justification, the church, the sacraments, among others). Luther's methodology is of great significance for dialogue with the Eastern Orthodox. Yet, the text of the American dialogue evinces no awareness of it.

As his sermons show, the theology of Luther is indebted both to Paul and to John, and the witness of both of these apostles centers in cross and resurrection. Luther is therefore not, as this text would have it, to be reckoned only as a representative of the western tradition. Rather, for biblical reasons, he combines both the western and the eastern traditions. If one considers further that Luther habitually preaches the gospel with the assistance of the doctrines of the Trinity and of the two natures of Christ, one perceives that the basis for Lutheran-Orthodox dialogue is broader than this document implies. Finally, one should mention the rich pneumatology of Luther, which stands in stark contrast to the impoverished pneumatology of scholasticism. A survey of Luther's pneumatology, for example in the Large Catechism, evinces his commonality with the Greek tradition.

(2.) Regarding the relation between justification and sanctification, it is true that both were largely understood and discussed as two distinct theological categories in view of the background in later scholasticism (page 19). This distinction occurred in defense of the reformational *sola fidei*, without which there would be no surety of salvation. The relation, nonetheless, between justification and sanctification is but one, although an especially important relationship, within a greater whole. The central assertion is that sanctification is in no way *forma*, *pars*, or *causa* of justification, but rather arises out of it. Similarly, the renewal of the Holy Spirit does

not belong to justification but arises out of it. Renewal remains unperfected in this life, receiving perfection only at the resurrection of the dead. This would be a further aspect of the "process" of justification from a Lutheran perspective, which, of course, would have to be complemented by the idea of the new birth.

Important, however, is the fact that the beginning of a new and eternal life brings new motivations with it, for the new will cooperates with the Spirit so that fruits follow the new birth. Even Quenstedt maintained that new birth and justification are one in regards to time, being more intimately bound together than the so-called mathematical point. Very important as well are the statements of the Apology concerning justification and regeneration. The faith which apprehends the promise of Christ "justifies and vivifies" (Apology 4:62). And the text continues: "'to be justified' means to make unrighteous men righteous or to regenerate them, as well as to be pronounced or accounted righteous" (Apology 4:72; one may also see 78, 117-118). This point is made in the "Common Statement" as well as in the article by Michael McDaniel, in which reference is also made to the "happy exchange" and the idea of participation (page 81).

(3.) Perhaps the greatest weakness of the document is the pervasive failure to do justice to the church and sacraments in Lutheran understanding, so that the Lutheran position on justification and sanctification is itself hardly to be recognized. We may refer especially here to Luther's explanation of the Third Article of the Creed in his Large Catechism. Here Luther speaks not only of the general activity of the Spirit but also of the church as the womb and mother of the faithful. The "Common Statement" reserves such an understanding almost exclusively to the Eastern Orthodox, although almost parenthetically it is added that "from time to time in Lutheran writings" such an understanding appears (page 23). How the Lutheran participants in the dialogue could have been satisfied with such a formulation remains known only to themselves. For the idea of growth in faith one may refer to the explanation of Luther of the second petition of the Lord's Prayer in the Large Catechism (LC 52-54).

Equally strong in the Large Catechism is the idea of participation within the sacramental context of baptism, and indeed in the sense of a holistic occurrence involving body and soul (LC 44-45). Equally emphasized is the spiritual growth in the grace of baptism (LC 64-

73). The same thing is true of the holistic understanding involving body and soul of participation in the sacrament of the altar (LC 67-68.). In view of these passages, the sentence that "the Orthodox think of one continuous process, whereas the Lutherans distinguish the initial act of justification and regeneration from the process of sanctification" (page 30) is not clear enough. This judgment appears superficially to be true, but in fact it hides the actual intention of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions.

For the idea of the "happy exchange" the text mentions Luther only peripherally. Johann Arndt is given more attention (pages 21-22). Peripheral also is the use made of the statement of Luther that "in faith itself Christ is present" (*in ipsa fide Christus adest* [page 23]). This statement of Luther, however, has played a significant role in recent Finnish research on Luther, which sees in such statements a common ground between the view of Luther of justification and Eastern Orthodoxy's deification. Yet, in this theological document such statements of Luther bear no freight. The potential that Luther gives for meaningful dialogue with the Eastern Orthodox will not be realized until the central significance that John has for Luther is appreciated. One might similarly add that the document seems not to appreciate the significance of Paul for the eastern tradition, which can be seen, for example, in Irenaeus.

In view of the accompanying articles in this book, three final points may be made. (1.) Although it may be generally true that the Eastern Orthodox place less importance on formal confessional texts than Lutheranism has done and that Orthodoxy refers more to the totality of its tradition (page 14), it is true that Lutheranism can also refer to its own lived history. Especially if one considers the rich heritage of Eastern Orthodox liturgy, one may equally consider the liturgical texts of Lutheranism, its hymnodic tradition, and the sermons of Luther, which comprise almost one-third of his writings in the Weimar edition. These aspects of the Lutheran heritage have had a very great effect on the people of Lutheran tradition, and the sermons of Luther remain a largely untapped source in research on Luther.

(2.) As regards certain views often associated with Eastern Orthodoxy—incarnation, deification, new Adam, the humanity of Jesus as a hook, Spirit and incarnation, recapitulation, spiritual growth, renewal of the whole cosmos—these can be found in a fullness in the theology of Luther as well, especially in his sermons.

(3.) The articles on the image of God, nature and grace, and the free will are helpful for orientation, for they indicate the areas which must receive attention in future discussions. If, however, one considers this book in its entirety, it is clear that the European and American dialogues would benefit from a higher degree of cooperation. Cooperative work in patristic studies and research on Luther is required, as is presently occurring in Europe. It would be especially beneficial were the present dialogue to become a triologue through the addition of the Roman Catholics. But, in any case, Lutherans are required to engage in a more intensive apprehension of their own tradition. The American dialogue demonstrates the need for Lutheran participants to come to terms with their own identity in its true extent so that they may more responsibly represent their tradition in ecumenical discussion.

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A HISTORY OF THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE. By David Norton. 2 volumes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

In a recent advertisement for the Contemporary English Version of the Bible (American Bible Society, 1995), the president of the ABS tells us that this new translation is "as clear as the King James Version was to the readers of 1611," while the principal translator of the new work claims that he and his colleagues "have tied the CEV very closely to the spirit of the King James Bible." Now, one does not have to read very far in the CEV to realize that it is not connected to the King James Version by vocabulary, style, or philosophy of translation. So why is it that its publishers believe that they should sell the new version by tying it to the old? David Norton's work provides the answer—and much more.

Inevitably, the Bible generates a range of attitudes towards it. In institutions such as Concordia Theological Seminary more attention is paid to the text in the original languages than to translations, and the attitudes studied are primarily those of theologians and exegetes. What Norton does, however, is to focus our attention upon translations of the Bible (into English especially) and upon the opinions of men of letters so as to demonstrate the on-going significance of the Bible amidst "the shifting interrelationships between religion and culture" (2:435).

Not surprisingly, the King James Version holds a major place in Norton's history; but this work is about attitudes as well as translations, so Norton begins not in 1611 with the King James Version nor even in 1525 with Tyndale, but in antiquity – with the Septuagint, the New Testament, and the fathers, especially Jerome, who struggled to develop a method of translating appropriate to a sacred text in which, he believed, “even the order of the words is a mystery” (1:34), and Augustine, who struggled with the failure of the biblical text to conform to contemporary standards of eloquence.

One of Augustine's assumptions was that the sacred origins of the text ought to guide one in his evaluation of its form; and Norton demonstrates that throughout history judgments regarding the literary qualities of the Bible have been influenced *a priori* by religious attitudes toward the Bible. Yet one of the more important parts in Norton's work is his demonstration that a high view of the Bible's inspiration and authority in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not entail a literary appreciation for the translations of that period, including the King James Version. By carefully assessing the evidence, Norton shows that it was not the aim of the translators to create a literary Bible but an accurate one and that it was not until more than a century after the King James Version was published that people began to appreciate its literary qualities. Its early critics, like the Puritan leader John Selden were likely to praise its precision (“the best translation in the world and renders the sense of the original best”) while condemning its style (1:229):

There is no book so translated as the Bible. For the purpose, if I translate a French book into English, I turn it into English phrase not into French English . . . but the Bible is translated into English words rather than into English phrase: the Hebraisms are kept and the phrase of that language is kept. As for example, “he uncovered her shame,” which is well enough so long as scholars have to do with it, but when it comes among the common people, Lord what gear do they make of it.

What began to change at the end of the eighteenth century was not, of course, the text of the Authorized Version, but attitudes towards both the version and literature in general. With respect to the former, Norton shows that familiarity and continuity were preconditions to a positive revaluation of the English style of the King James Version. People like things to which they are accustomed and are especially hostile to innovation in religion. As the Anglican Bishop William

Beveridge (who died in 1708) once put it, "It is a great prejudice to the new that it is new, wholly new; for whatsoever is new in religion at the best is unnecessary" (2:43). As Norton points out, this was the spirit which in part animated Augustine's defense of the Old Latin, Roman Catholic adherence to the Vulgate, and Fundamentalist insistence upon the King James Version.

But besides a natural preference for the tried and true, proponents of the Authorized Version also appealed to new ideas about literature at the end of the eighteenth and in the early nineteenth centuries. According to Norton, aesthetic theory in the Augustan age emphasized artifice—technique and rules—in evaluating artistic accomplishments and so considered poetry the supreme literary achievement; but in the Romantic era the effectiveness of a work, its power to move, rather than its conformity to literary standards became a prime criterion for judging good writing. From this new perspective, prose as well as poetry could be great literature; and a prose translation that created a powerful religious effect in the mind of its reader would be great literature. By the nineteenth century, therefore, the King James Version had triumphed.

But its triumph was only for the moment, since by its own translators' criterion of excellence—accuracy—the King James Version came under increasing attack as the nineteenth century progressed, especially from the standpoint of the underlying text of the New Testament. Accordingly, Norton's work also describes the changes in attitudes that prepared the way for the Revised Version in 1881, which, ironically in view of the original non-literary character of the King James Version, sought to preserve the style of the seventeenth century version, even to the point of deliberately using archaic words and phrases.

Although the King James Version survived the Revised Version, by the middle of the twentieth century it had lost its monopoly among English readers of the Bible to the Revised Standard Version. As the end of the century approaches, it is losing its place among even the most conservative Christians to versions like the New International Version and the New King James Bible. Publishers may still invoke the old version in their advertisements but what they are trying to sell are new ones. Yet, as Norton argues, in spite of the proliferation versions of the Bible in our day, knowledge of the Bible among English readers has declined drastically. A century ago, literate people grew up with the Bible and knew the stories of the Bible.

Such knowledge is no longer common today, even among practicing Christians.

In spite of the increasing secularization that accounts for such ignorance, the academy has found room for the Bible in higher education—not as a source of truth about God and man but as a cultural icon, “as literature.” Some of Norton’s most interesting work is his description and analysis of literary approaches to the Bible in modern critics like Erich Auerbach, Frank Kermode, and Gabriel Josipovici. Norton’s discussion of issues like the “transparency of the text” (the ability of a text to lead the reader to something beyond itself—to truth, reality, or meaning) is very helpful, not only for understanding something of the problems that intellectuals which have today in accepting the truth claims of the Christian religion, but also for evaluating the usefulness of literary approaches to Scripture for Christian apologetics and missions.

From Augustine to Josipovici, from Saint Paul to Prince Charles, David Norton’s history is engaging and stimulating. Although the detail is enormous, the writing is clear. One can take issue with this point or that. Norton, to this reviewer’s mind, fails to appreciate fully the arguments of those who defended the *Textus Receptus* in the nineteenth century, and his neologism “AVolatry” to describe proponents of the King James Version is displeasing. Nonetheless, he has produced a masterpiece, a comprehensive account of literary attitudes toward the Bible in the English-speaking world. It is a very impressive book that will richly reward those who read it with new understanding and appreciation for the English Bible.

Cameron A. MacKenzie

MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By David L. Bartlett. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.

While reading the ending first might ruin a good Agatha Christie, it does wonders for ferreting out the agenda of a theological work. Where is Bartlett heading? In a few sentences of his conclusion he lays his hand on the table (page 192):

Responding to an early version of some of this study, two pastors explained their practice. One pastor trains church members to take turns presiding at the weekly Communion. Another pastor invites a church member who serves as sponsor

for a baptismal candidate to perform the baptism. For these aberrations it helps that both are pastors of congregations in (different) denominations that pride themselves on local autonomy and congregational polity. Are these the first winds of anarchy or the blowing of the Spirit?

Even as one's confessional instincts shudder at the very thought, one quickly sees how close to home this strikes. Just how did he get there?

Appearing in the Fortress series "Overtures to Biblical Theology," this book is ostensibly an exegetical study. From the topics covered one might presume this is true: ministry in the letters of Paul, in Matthew, John, Luke and Acts, and the Pastorals. Though it is always honorable to address each author's uniqueness, Bartlett rather sets each against the other. From the far-left Pauline view of "ministry" to the far-right incipient catholicism of the pseudo-Pauline Pastorals, Bartlett paints a picture as fragmented as modern Christendom. He then brandishes their gloriously unsettled diversity in the face of Catholic and Protestant dogmatism alike, whose ministerial structures are illustrated respectively from *Lumen Gentium* and *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*. Simply put, he argues that all contemporary structures of office, especially their titles, privileges, and hierarchies, are contrary to the free, functional, charismatic, and egalitarian ministry of the New Testament.

One could quibble over exegetical details, but the truth is that there is no exegesis, at least nothing serious. He finds no office of apostle in John, for instance, because the term is missing (a fact which R. Brown calls "good historical sense," since it is a post-resurrectional term!). Again, he calls us to "be wary of any ministry that calls itself 'set apart'" (page 200)—despite Romans 1:1! But mostly he just compares the RSV with the NRSV, then dismisses the data in order to give his "feeling" about the texts.

No, the real issue is hermeneutical. Can one ignore all of church history in order to reinvent the church from one's simplistic re-reading of the New Testament? Bartlett, for example, finds no evidence in the New Testament that only clergy are to preside at the sacrament, despite Ignatius' early testimony that there is no Eucharist without the bishop. In fact, he seems to be on a personal vendetta to prove the opposite. The hermeneutical question is: can one hand a Bible to a Baptist and expect him to create the Office of

the Ministry from scratch? Or will his pre-suppositions simply lead him to discover what he always believed: that "ministry" is merely the church's recognition of the variety of gifts among its members?

Add in higher-critical methodology and the problem is exacerbated. As Bartlett examines in succession the presumed *Sitz im Leben* which produced each writing, he reconstructs the imaginary church out of which it arose. The various approaches to ministry which he finds are therefore simply the church's own flexible responses to the needs of its people. In other words, the structure of ministry is not given by the New Testament, but following the New Testament example the church should create ministry to suit "felt needs." And so we reach the crux: for Bartlett there is no "Office of the Ministry" which is given from above, but only various functions of "ministry" which arise from below. Bartlett can only speak of how the church created a picture of Christ to support the kind of ministry they wanted, never of the Christ who instituted and gave the ministry to his church. Certainly any Lutheran reader ought to be duly troubled.

Thomas M. Winger
Saint Catharines, Ontario

THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE GENTILES: PAUL'S LETTERS TO THE GALATIANS AND ROMANS. By Hendrikus Boers. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1994. 334 pages. Cloth.

This study of Paul's epistles to the Galatians and Romans employs three modern methodologies in interpretation: Semiotics (which views language as a system of signs that express meaning), Structuralism (which emphasizes that meaning resides primarily in the way words are ordered and not in the words themselves), and Text-Linguistics (which focuses on the syntactic linkage of sentences). Boers states his first and most significant step in exegesis with these words: "in order to be able to interpret a text we are dependent on an overall understanding of its meaning which permits us to make sense of the individual parts and the way they are structured" (page 35). Most of the volume is devoted to this task of developing an interpretive framework or "macro-structure" for both epistles. He argues that the macro-structure of Galatians grows from the practical question of why circumcision should not be required of Gentile Christians (Galatians 5:2-12). He sees Romans as

having a two-fold thrust: salvation by faith for everyone who believes and the priority of the Jews in salvation (Romans 1:16). His exegesis flows from these themes and serves as the basis for a discussion the "semantic deep structure" of Paul's thought (that is, getting to the system of values that dictated why Paul wrote what is contained in these epistles). As one can already see, the hermeneutical jargon alone will overwhelm and discourage some readers.

This volume is a refreshing contrast to some modern Pauline scholarship which focuses on supposed contradictions and the lack of systematic thought in Paul's writings. Boers, a professor of New Testament in Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, handles Paul's differing approach and content in Galatians and Romans sympathetically. He continually emphasizes the close and coherent interrelationships between the ideas found in these epistles. The lengthy appendices, which detail these interrelationships, contain the most helpful material in this book.

In spite of all his interpretive sophistication, Boers arrives at several problematic conclusions. The most significant is his declaration that the traditional understanding of these epistles expressing an opposition between justification by faith and justification through works is false (page 221). He bases this conclusion on the positive assessment of justification through works present in Romans 2, where Paul writes about God's people being rewarded for doing good. This results in confusion of justification and sanctification (and a blurring of law and gospel). For example, he writes on (page 223): "Justification by faith does not stand opposed to justification for good works, but to the restriction of justification to the Jews through the law (Galatians 3:17), signified by circumcision (Romans 4:10-12)." His interpretation of Paul's discussion of Jewish privilege and the salvation of "all Israel" in Romans 9-11 also goes too far in letting apparent contradictions stand. Thus, in spite of Paul's argument earlier in Romans, Boers affirms that Paul teaches the election of the Jews. Furthermore, his concluding treatment of Paul's "micro-universe" is disappointingly flat as it appeals to Barth/Bultmann existentialism and contemporary social interpretation to explain the basis of Paul's convictions. Lastly, and most importantly, clear proclamation of the gospel from these epistles is lost in the maze of hermeneutical maneuvering. Therefore, although this study addresses a biblical teaching that is central to

Lutheran theology through a detailed analysis of the heart of Luther's "canon within the canon," most Lutheran pastors will not find a wealth of material here that is helpful to their teaching and preaching of these important epistles.

Charles A. Gieschen

CHRISTIANITY AND CHRISTENDOM IN THE MIDDLE AGES: THE RELATIONS BETWEEN RELIGION, CHURCH, AND SOCIETY. By Adriaan H. Bredero. Translated by Reinder Bruinsma. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1994.

This book, first published in Dutch in 1986, consists of a collection of essays that the author has published and presented on various occasions. He has attempted to weave the essays together into a single work. At times this approach makes the work a little clumsy or leads to some repetition, which is further complicated by the fact that it is a translation. That does not mean that the book is not worthy of reading, but the reader may find the gems are often buried deep in a confusing maze of tunnels.

Bredero, an emeritus professor of medieval history in Amsterdam, demonstrates his familiarity with the source-documents for this time period. Throughout the book he raises the question of "how medieval Christianity still is, and how much of this should be considered as belonging to the essential Christian tradition, or how much could be discarded in order to make the following acculturation possible" (page x). The medieval church had to wrestle with distinctions between the Christian tradition and cultural accommodation. Bredero aptly analyzes some of those key developments, while raising modern-day issues. The discussion of saints and sainthood reveals the cultural factors in the rising importance of saints. Such knowledge is valuable in considering some of the cultural pressures upon the church today. What is the real difference between cultural accommodations resulting in glorification of the saints and modern accommodations to culture regarding the liturgy of the church?

The book is filled with interesting insights into the medieval piety of the masses and the clergy. To anyone unwilling to tackle this book as a whole, the reviewer commends four essays within it. "Jerusalem in the West" links the importance of Jerusalem to the growing popularity of relics, pilgrimages, and the Crusades. "Saints and

Sainthood details the changing definition of a saint, the need for saints, and the transformation in the process of establishing sainthood in the church. "Anti-Jewish Sentiment in Medieval Society" traces the theological language used to speak of the Jews and the role the whole church and society played. Bredero notes that theology was not the source of persecution; rather the lack of stability in society caused individuals, including some preachers of the church, to focus on the Jewish people as a scapegoat. "Religious Life in the Low Countries (ca. 1050-1384)" is an attempt to examine more closely one particular locale and the interaction between church and society.

Bredero correctly observes that the lines are not always clear between practices that developed because of societal shifts and those that resulted from piety. The medieval church and her society were closely bound. Christendom was not synonymous with Christianity, but the two were always interacting. Bredero is to be commended for defending the theologians of the church who fought against the encroachments of society, while correctly noting that they often failed in their task. Yet in the end, Bredero raises more questions than answers about the medieval nature of Christianity.

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THE MYSTERY AND THE PASSION: A HOMILETIC READING OF THE GOSPEL TRADITIONS. By David G. Buttrick. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.

"When [the apostles] spoke of salvation, they were not handing out stamped tickets to heaven or offering a happy handful of Jesus. . . . No, for the apostles, salvation was a new social order" (page 1). "Therefore, from the beginning God has had in mind what we call 'salvation,' namely, the social realization of the Great Commandment—a whole wide world living in the holy courtesies of exchanged love" (page 231).

From first to last, David Buttrick's "homiletic reading of the gospel traditions" reads the resurrection and passion accounts of Christ from that viewpoint: salvation as a new social order. To the extent that his point of view is valid, *The Mystery and the Passion* challenges preachers to proclaim a dimension of the gospel that conservative Lutherans may seldom explore. However, because he

overtakes his thesis, in that his thesis is overstated, Buttrick has reduced what should indeed be "mystery" to just that one dimension.

Buttrick, Professor of homiletics at Vanderbilt Divinity School and one of the two or three most widely-noted homileticians in current Protestantism, studies the gospel accounts of Christ's resurrection and passion (in that order) as preaching texts. He dialogues with the texts and his readers much as a pastor would in sermon preparation and dialogue includes many questions we should think have been answered quite definitively: "Is the resurrection historical?" (page 18); "Did Jesus actually believe Himself to be the Messiah?" (page 113); "Could Jesus see in advance the outcome of His dying?" (page 118). Buttrick's responses to all of these are disappointing. In fact, he often dismisses the historicity of the texts as irrelevant or even heresy (page 9), thus himself becoming guilty of allegorizing of the worst kind.

Other questions he raises are the kind every preacher wishes he would think to ask. Buttrick turns up preaching pearls from the word by interrogating the literary intentions of the evangelists. For example, might the "young man" of Mark 14:51 be reported to symbolize one "who is stripped naked by the passion of Christ, buried with Him, and raised in a white baptismal robe to proclaim the gospel message" (page 151)? And what does the cross really say about the nature of God? Preaching, Buttrick suggests, most often depicts a dominating, enthroned God. "But suppose that instead God is like Christ Jesus the crucified one – what then?" (page 40)?

Unfortunately, Buttrick invariably answers by exalting God's new social order at the expense of the personal comfort of the gospel. He is helpful in reminding of the collective shape of sin and that "there is a neighborhood in each of us that cannot be ignored" (page 98). But painfully under emphasized is the application of the forgiveness won by Jesus' cross and empty tomb to individual sinners.

The call to apply the resurrection and passion texts to our present world is often brilliantly sounded – and well taken. There is, though, much more to the mystery.

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CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION, Volume 2: From The Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590-604), Part Two: The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century. By Aloys Grillmeier, S.J., with Theresia Hainthaler. Translated by Pauline Allen and John Cawte. London: Mowbrays; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995. xxv + 565 pages. Cloth. \$50.00.

CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION, Volume 2: From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590-604), Part Four: The Church of Alexandria with Nubia and Ethiopia after 451. By Aloys Grillmeier, S.J., with Theresia Hainthaler. Translated by O.C. Dean. London: Mowbrays; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996. xxiv + 431 pages. Cloth.

With these two volumes the truly classic and magisterial work of Grillmeier on the history of the doctrine of the Person of Christ is continued. The same trenchant analysis of the pertinent texts, the same thorough interaction with significant secondary sources, and the same comprehensive knowledge of source materials characterizes these two volumes even as they have the earlier ones. Grillmeier, who was Professor of Dogmatics and the History of Dogma at the Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule St. Georgen, Frankfurt am Main, from 1950-1978, is ably assisted by Theresia Hainthaler, who has been a co-worker with Grillmeier since 1986. Her work is especially evident in Part Four in which she authors several sections.

The especial value of these two volumes is their thorough, detailed compendium of christological doctrine after the Council of Chalcedon. Textbooks generally provide good coverage of the development of christology through the fourth ecumenical council, so that the early development of the various options is widely known. Figures such as Apollonaris of Laodicea, Athanasius, the Cappadocians, Nestorius, Cyril, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Leo the Great are standard fare in this discussion and are well-known in the usual survey work of the early church. Much less well-known are the figures of the post-Chalcedon era alien to our own theological heritage. Secondly, many of the writings of this later period are from non-Greek areas where Syriac, Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic were the theological coin of the realm. It takes specialized scholarship to make these sources known to us, and unfortunately such scholarship is not widely published and readily available to the general theological and seminary public. Much of the value of these two volumes lies in the

fact that they discuss the christology of significant, yet largely unknown theologians. Finally, the post-Chalcedonian developments happened within the context of growing East-West schism, intractable doctrinal polemics, and philosophical subtlety, which makes the theological discussion seem inconsequential to Christian faith and life and lifeless for Christian thought. In an age such as ours, when doctrinal rectitude and ecclesiastical definition are not highly regarded, the post-Chalcedonian heritage has been relegated to peripheral status.

Nonetheless, the post-Chalcedonian developments mediated the received understanding of the earlier classical christological thinkers and established the basic categories by which christology continued to be thought and taught. This reviewer is prepared to argue that for Lutherans the post-Chalcedonian development is crucial. Luther's christology, so Cyrillian in its interests and form, is either based upon, or, if one holds that Luther had no direct knowledge of it, was creatively parallel to, the post-Chalcedonian definition of Christ, which worked out the doctrines of "enhypostasia" and "anhypostasia." My own view is that these aspects of developed post-Chalcedonian thinking harbor significant resources for our own context where the notion of human personhood is so much in dispute. Lutherans may also wish to take a second look at the theopaschite controversy ("One of the Trinity was crucified"), which took Christ's humanity with determined seriousness. Luther's "theology of the cross" is not alien to this piece of the post-Chalcedonian story.

For these reasons the content of the present two volumes hold much interest for the church today. The legal definition of "monophysitism" as heretical has seriously hampered an appropriation of the likes of Severus of Antioch, the Scythian monks, and the christology of the Coptic and Ethiopic churches. Given their own context, Chalcedon appeared to be a Nestorianizing council and the "Tome" of Leo I a backdoor invitation to Antiochene christology. We need not accept that judgment to recognize that the interests of the "monophysites" on the unity of Christ's person parallel the major christological interests of Martin Chemnitz. Of course, Grillmeier's remarkable contribution does not address these issues. For us, however, it is a good reason why these two volumes hold out special interest. Beyond that, Grillmeier and Hainthaler have provided the best sort of scholarship—they have opened to us the vista of a truly

ecumenical and catholic rendering of the one Lord, Jesus Christ and have made accessible historical and theological sources not otherwise available to us. They have given us the opportunity to think about thinkers and thoughts which have been largely veiled to us, and have provided a "base-line" history of christology that will prove itself the standard for many years to come.

It takes time and mental effort to read these many pages. For those willing to do so, the rewards are legion. For those not willing to do so, may I recommend the Nicene Creed and the *Te Deum*.

William C. Weinrich

THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Eduard Lohse. Translated by M. Eugene Boring. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

Living the sanctified life and preaching the sanctified life — both are matters of vital concern to the conscientious pastor. Neither is easy. Hence substantive help should be welcome. Although Lohse's book is not entitled "How to Live the Sanctified Life" or, "How to Preach Sanctification," this volume does lay theological foundations that challenge the reader to critical thought in a way that is helpful both for preaching and living the sanctified life.

Lohse says of his book that it is only a survey concentrating on essential points. And such it is. Without scholarly apparatus (there are no footnotes, but there are helpful lists of suggested readings), Lohse gives an overview of ethics in the New Testament. The reader quickly senses that "overview" and "superficial view" are not synonymous — at least not here. With penetrating insight the author leads the reader through the ethics of the New Testament following a methodology that is neither chronological nor strictly thematic but a happy middle way.

Some of the challenges and concerns as they surface for the undersigned include the following: Can one preach specific sanctification without lapsing into legalism? There are, after all, those *Haustafeln* listing specifics. Lohse argues that, though "concrete conduct and decisive action" are called for, the catalogues avoid casuistry, leaving the determination of conduct in a specific situation up to the individual (page 88).

Lohse properly notes that Paul's procedure is first law and then gospel. He uses the familiar terminology *Gabe* and *Aufgabe* (gift and assignment), *Zuspruch* and *Anspruch* (promise and demand). But then Lohse calls attention to how 1 Peter reverses the order with the ethical exhortation coming first and the specific grounding second, as in 1 Peter 5:2 (page 181). How are these approaches to be harmonized? Applicable to the question of the third use of the law is this forthright statement: "What stands written in Scripture applies to Christians too as a guide for how to live their lives" (page 164).

Although Lohse finally affirms *sola gratia*, he seems to interpret the Old Testament as teaching work-righteousness. What is one to make of a comment like this: "The law is a gift, the proof of God's love for Israel. By this means God opened up the possibility for his people to accomplish good works, earn merit, and attain righteousness" (page 14; one may compare page 123).

Again and again Lohse refers to the redactional procedures of the gospel-writers. Here is a typical statement: "The earliest Christian community gathered, preserved, handed on, and interpreted the preaching of Jesus under the guidance of the leading question of the relevance of this message for Christian conduct" (page 31; one may compare pages 44, 50, 53, 61, 70, 74, among others). Nowhere did the reviewer find Lohse saying that the "redaction" occurred under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Without such guidance, the work of the writers of the New Testament becomes all too human. Thus, for instance, Lohse contends that the "Apostolic Decree" was originally in force only in a particular region. "The impression that the 'Apostolic Decree' was a fundamental principle binding on the whole church was first given by the Lukan editorial work" (pages 203-204). Such skewing of the original intent must mean that in his writing Luke was on his "all too human" own, not under the Spirit's guidance.

Many challenging problems are broached by Lohse. Among them are the questions of Deutero-Pauline writings, James and Paul on the law, the first-person description in Romans 7, Hebrews and the question of a second repentance, Luther on James, homosexuality, eschatology, and ethics and abortion.

It is evident that though this book is only an overview, it is an overview replete with challenges and stimuli, which brings us back to the problem of preaching the sanctified life. There comes to mind

the polarity between the final thesis of Walther in *The Proper Distinction of Law and Gospel* and the blunt comment of Dietrich Bonhoeffer on the perils of cheap grace. Walther asserts "The Word of God is not rightly divided when the person teaching it does not allow the gospel to have a general predominance in his teaching." Bonhoeffer comments: "The word of cheap grace has been the undoing of more Christians than any commandment of works." As the preacher walks the tightrope between these polarities, a careful and critical reading of Lohse may help him maintain his balance.

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PAUL'S NARRATIVE THOUGHT WORLD: THE TAPESTRY OF TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH. By Ben Witherington III. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994. 373 pages. Paper.

Scholarly preoccupation with the contingent circumstances of the individual Pauline epistles in recent decades and the lack of consensus on exactly which epistles Paul penned has limited serious discussion of the broader question of Pauline thought and theology. Unlike the Gospels or Revelation where the reader sees a unified story unfold through narrative or narrated vision, one cannot point to any one Pauline epistle and say: "Here is the story Paul wanted to tell, from beginning to end." However, as Witherington argues, the thoughts and theology that surface in Paul's letters to particular congregations "have arisen as a result of his deep and ongoing reflection on the narrative that molds all of his thoughts" (page 3). Therefore, Witherington considers it his challenge to weave the varied threads from the epistles into a larger tapestry that accurately reflects the narrative which underlies Paul's life and theology.

This synthetic discussion of Pauline thought is not a systematic catalogue of Pauline ideas. "Narrative" is the operative word. Ben Witherington, Professor of Biblical and Wesleyan Studies at Ashland Theological Seminary and prolific author in recent years, sees four interrelated stories of this larger drama that repeatedly surface in the epistles: the story of a world gone wrong; the story of Israel in that world; the story of Christ, which arises out of the story of the world and Israel; and the story of Christians, which arises out of these three stories and which begins the story of the world set right again (page

5). The story of Christ justifiably dominates this reconstruction of Paul's narrative.

The overall approach is engaging as it strikes a balance between detailed exegesis of individual texts and keeping the larger story before the reader's eyes. Much of Witherington's exegesis is to be commended. He argues that Paul used received tradition in his epistles. The cosmic and personal effects of the Fall are emphasized. He perceptively notes that it is Adam and Abraham that are the key players in Paul's history of the world and Israel, not Moses and David. His discussions of universal atonement (with emphasis on propitiation), as well as justification and sanctification, are quite sound. In his treatment of the end times in Paul, he notes how the *Yom Yahweh* of the prophets becomes the *Day of our Lord Jesus Christ* in Paul and correctly emphasizes eschatology rather than apocalyptic thought (these two are often improperly used as synonyms).

There are problems in exegesis, some of which arise from the author's reformed perspective. The following examples are illustrative. He dismisses the imputed nature of "righteousness" in Galatians 3:6 and Romans 4:3 (page 44). His interpretation of Romans 7 is flawed by the supposition that Paul is not talking about his current struggle with sin: "The point is that the Spirit has renovated the human will to the point where sin can be resisted" (page 27). His interpretation of the Jewish background of Paul's christology is unduly dominated by the Wisdom tradition. He should have at least discussed the Glory and Name traditions (one may compare C. Newman, *Paul's Glory-Christology* [1992] and D. Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology* [1992]). His interpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:45-48 (and his use of the NRSV translation "person" for "man") misses the point that Christ is the pre-existent "Man from heaven," that is, the Glory of the Lord who appears "in the likeness of a man" in Ezekiel 1:26). Furthermore, too much emphasis is placed on Paul's acknowledgment of Jesus as "Lord" by virtue of the resurrection and exaltation.

A more substantial criticism is the sacramental bankruptcy of Witherington's exegesis. He separates water and spirit baptism (pages 279, 313); the former is a "symbol" of what happens in the latter. He views Baptism and the Lord's Supper as "rites" that are "establishing or reaffirming an exclusive unity and relationship that precludes other ones" (page 306). Therefore, he does not understand these rites of inclusion and unity as means of grace. Yet, even with

these criticisms, this volume is a valuable resource for study of Paul that can help pastors to see and interpret the homiletical threads of our Pauline pericopes in the broader context of the Apostle's narrative tapestry.

Charles A. Gieschen

GALILEO, BELLARMINE, AND THE BIBLE. By Richard J. Blackwell. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.

How does one reconcile the biblical world-view with a scientific one following the "Enlightenment"? This has been one of the central questions of Christian theology for the past several centuries, and even to this day it troubles those who would remain faithful to the Christian tradition but recognize a wide chasm between biblical notions of reality and those of the modern age. Answers, of course, vary; and so far none has proved definitive or universally satisfying in Christendom as the ongoing debate regarding creationism demonstrates.

History *per se* cannot provide the answer, since past actions do not determine present choices of morally responsible beings. But history can assist the present generation by indicating some of the options that previous generations of Christians have adopted along with some of the consequences of those options. And, among the great episodes of the past in which Christians have experienced the tensions between the Bible and modernity, one of the most famous is the trial and condemnation of Galileo in seventeenth-century Rome for his championing of the Copernican theory of the universe. The story has been told well before (as, for example, by Stillman Drake, *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, and Maurice A. Finocchiaro, ed., *The Galileo Affair: A Documentary History*). The contribution of Richard Blackwell, however, is particularly important for its elucidation of just one aspect of the controversy—the role of the Bible in the arguments of Galileo and his critics, especially Cardinal Bellarmine, the great Jesuit theologian of the Counter-Reformation.

On the one hand, few readers of this journal will identify with the efforts of both parties in the debate to harmonize their biblical interpretations with the fathers of the church according to the rule laid down by the Council of Trent: "No one, relying on his own

judgment and distorting the Sacred Scriptures according to his own conceptions, shall dare to interpret them contrary to that sense which Holy Mother Church . . . has held and does hold, or even contrary to the unanimous agreement of the Fathers" (page 12). This principle meant that both Galileo and his opponents paid much attention to the astronomical views of the fathers and argued over whether their casual comments regarding the movements of heavenly bodies were determinative for the exegesis of Scripture.

Still, the issue of what the Bible means when it affirms that the sun stood still (Joshua 10:12) is one that has also vexed those outside the Roman Church. Luther, for example, is reported to have remarked regarding Copernicus, "Whoever wants to be clever must agree with nothing that others esteem. He must do something of his own. This is what that fellow does who wishes to turn the whole of astronomy upside down. Even in those things that are thrown into disorder I believe the Holy Scriptures, for Joshua commanded the sun to stand still and not the earth" (*Table Talk*, LW 54:359). And even though most of us have long since decided to understand the Bible as speaking phenomenologically, describing nature as it *appears* to the ordinary observer rather than according to the canons of contemporary science, it still is troubling to recognize that this hermeneutical readjustment arose initially from external pressures generated by Copernicus and Galileo and not from the internal evidence of the scriptural text.

As far as Blackwell is concerned, the decision to condemn Galileo shows the danger of centralized authority in the church. "In effect, centrally institutionalized authority tends to evolve into power. . . . We begin to see an emphasis on obedience rather than rational evaluation, on tests of faith, on loyalty oaths, on intimidation, on secret proceedings, . . . and ultimately on the whole repertoire of the Inquisition" (page 177). Unfortunately, this view suggests a confidence in "rational evaluation" that is unwarranted by either history or personal experience; and, unless the church is simply to become a home to those enamored of personalized piety, some sort of authority is necessary. The question, of course, is what kind of authority is necessary and, more particularly, how does any authority determine the parameters within which it may accommodate the "truth" it has received to the "truths" of contemporary culture. The merit of Blackwell's book is that it shows us how ecclesiastical authorities and their opponents attempted to

define these parameters in a particular case. What Blackwell's book does not do is show us how to do so today.

Cameron A. MacKenzie

TEACHING LAW AND GOSPEL. By William E. Fischer. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1996.

The author offers a study guide by which Christian day school and Sunday School teachers may be taught rightly to divide law and gospel. He seeks to set forth in a simple manner not only the scriptural foundations for such teaching, but also examples of how the law-gospel principle is correctly applied. Fischer makes the art of drawing and applying this distinction seem awfully easy, perhaps easier than it truly is. This necessarily brief treatment of course leaves many questions unanswered. For example, the relationship between justification and sanctification is only partially addressed. Discussion questions are provided at the end of each of eleven chapters, but they seem to be rather introspective, providing no real springboard to larger study of the issues. As a whole, the work contributes little beyond the *Small Catechism*. Still, it would serve well as an additional elementary resource for an introduction to the law-gospel principle. It could be best used in conjunction with other works, such as C. F. W. Walter's *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, David Scaer's forthcoming locus on the law-gospel principle, and the Lutheran Confessions, all of which would provide open doors to a deeper study of the Scriptures themselves.

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